THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 15, 2024 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 22 • LATE CITY EDITION

BACK AFTER A YEAR

After India's semifinal exit in the 2022 T20 World Cup, Rohit had not featured in the shortest format for more than a year. Hardik Pandya had been leading the side in T20Is whenever he was available | P17

ALL-FORMAT CAPTAIN ROHIT SET TO LEAD INDIA AT T20 WORLD CUP

Cricket board secretary Jay Shah on Wednesday confirmed that Rohit Sharma will lead India at the T20 World Cup in June this year

'After Hardik injury, he's clear choice'

- Jay Shah said that after Hardik Pandya's injury in the ODI WC, it became clear that Rohit Sharma will captain
- Shah said that Rohit was captaining (in all formats) and he came back for the Afghanistan series. So BCCI would like to continue with him till the T20 World Cup

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For the first time since independence, at least 50% return on cost price guaranteed by increasing MSP of 22 crops
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Third round of talks with farmers today

Union leaders ask the protesters not to precipitate matters till meeting with govt in the evening is over

HARPREET BAJWA @Chandigarh

LEADERS of the protesting farmers on Wednesday agreed to hold talks with the Centre the next evening and decided against any further escalation till then. They advised participants of the Dilli Chalo protest not to precipitate matters.

The day began with reports of scuffle between protesters and the Haryana Police at the Shambhu and Khanauri interstate borders. The police used drones to drop the gas canisters, which became an contentious inter-state issue.

On top of the talks agenda is the demand for a legal guarantee to the minimum support price mechanism for procurement of agricultural produce.

After a meeting with Punjab police officials in the evening, Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee general secretary Sarwan Singh Pandher and Bharat Kisan Union (Ekta Sidhupur) president Jagjit Singh Dallewal said: "The third round of talks will be held with Union ministers Arjun Munda, Piyush Goyal and Nityanand Rai tomorrow evening at Chandigarh. Till then, we request everyone else to make the atmosphere conducive."

"It has been projected as if we want to break into Haryana and create lawlessness but it is not true," he said. He also requested the government to reciprocate by stopping tear gas use.

Punjab BKU (Ekta-Ugrahan) decided to disrupt railway traffic at seven places in the state between 12 noon and 4 pm to protest tear gas shelling.

In Haryana, farm leader Gurnam Singh Charuni criticised the police action and called a meeting of his union on Thursday to discuss the situation.

CBSE ADVISORY

CBSE advised students in Delhi appearing in their board exams from Thursday to leave home early so as to arrive at the exam centres in time

BHARAT BANDH

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha has given a call for Bharat Bandh on Friday and a road roko from 12-4 pm on that day

Farmers at the Shambhu border face tear gas lobbed by police to disperse them on Wednesday | PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi, UAE | PTI

1st UAE TEMPLE SYMBOL OF HARMONY, SAYS MODI

YESHI SELI @New Delhi

THE United Arab Emirates, which was hitherto known for its high-tech buildings such as Burj Khalifa, is going to be famous for its interfaith harmony and cultural identity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday as he inaugurated Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple. "A large number of devotees will come here... This will also increase people-to-people connections," he said.

Profusely thanking UAE President Sheikh Mohammad Zayed Al Nahyan for making the grand temple a reality, PM said the gracious gesture has won the hearts of 140 crore Indians.

"I am fortunate that last month I was able to witness the Ram temple consecration in Ayodhya... I am fortunate to be in Abu Dhabi to witness the inauguration of this temple," he added.

CHEERS RETURN

Ban on liquor sale only on Feb 16, 20

ENS @Bengaluru

OBSERVING that the ban on sale of liquor on days other than polling and counting of votes is excessive, the High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday confined it only to the days of election and counting from 6am to midnight in Bengaluru Urban district on February 16 and 20.

Justice SR Krishna Kumar passed this interim order after hearing a petition filed by the Bruhat Bengaluru Hotels' Association and others. P7

Uproar in Houses over life threat to MLA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

FORMER city corporator SH Padmaraj was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly issuing life threat to BJP MLA **K Gopalaiah** and his family members.

The issue led to a ruckus in the Legislative Assembly. Meanwhile, Padmaraj, who was released on bail, made explosive allegations that he had paid Rs 1 crore to Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R Ashoka for Bengaluru mayor's post.

Gopalaiah filed a complaint with Kamakshipalya police alleging that Padmaraj, the ex-corporator of Basaveshwara Nagar ward, called him around 11pm on Tuesday and threatened him with dire consequences and told him to return his money. Following the complaint, the police booked Padmaraj for intentional insult to provoke breach of peace and criminal intimidation and arrested him.

Later, he was produced before a city court, which granted him bail. Padmaraj, who was with BJP and worked closely with Gopalaiah, joined Congress in April 2023.

CONTINUED ON: P4

EXPRESS READ

ED issues 6th summons to Arvind Kejriwal

NEW DELHI: The ED has issued the sixth summons to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal for questioning him in the excise policy-linked money laundering case, sources said on Wednesday. The AAP chief has been asked to depose before the federal agency on February 19 | P12

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Sonia files for RS, buzz now on Priyanka

PREETHA NAIR @New Delhi

ENDING her 25-year-long innings in the Lok Sabha, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday filed nomination papers for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls from Rajasthan.

The formal announcement of Sonia's candidacy was made by the party after her arrival in Jaipur on Wednesday morning.

Accompanied by Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and some party leaders, Sonia filed the papers in the state assembly building around noon. She will be succeeding former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who is set to retire in April. Sources attributed Gandhi's shift to the Upper House to her 'poor health'.

The 77-year-old will now be vacating Raebareli Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh. The move also sparked speculation of Priyanka's Lok Sabha debut this year from the family bastion, five years after she entered active politics in 2019.

BJP re-nominates Nadda, Vaishnaw and L Murugan

The BJP on Wednesday re-nominated the party's national president J P Nadda and Union ministers Ashwini Vaishnaw and and L Murugan as Rajya Sabha candidates from Gujarat, Odisha and MP, respectively | PTI

Congress names Maken, Hussain, Chandrashekar to RS from K'taka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE AICC has cleared its list of candidates from Karnataka for the Rajya Sabha elections on February 27. Former union minister Ajay Maken from Delhi is among the three nominees. Of the four vacant seats from Karnataka, the Congress can win three easily with the support of 135 MLAs.

The party high command has chosen Maken, AICC treasurer, as it wants him to fight the BJP in the RS. Sitting RS member Dr L Hanumanthaiah, a Dalit ideologue, has been denied renomination. Syed Naseer Hussain, considered as AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge's man Friday, and GC Chandrashekar are the other Congress nominees from the state.

"Chandrashekar was made coordinator for Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in Karnataka and KPCC's bus yatra by senior leader Siddaramaiah and KPCC president DK Shivakumar. The party high command selected him in recognition of his work," a leader said. P6

The party will conduct another survey to finalise candidates for the LS polls. Anyone can contest as the party is looking at the winnability factor

DK Shivakumar, Deputy CM

It's time that by an ordinance BDA must be closed: HC CJ

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

CONSIDERING the plight of site allottees and those who have lost their land to layouts formed by the BDA , Chief Justice of the High Court of Karnataka PS Dinesh Kumar said, "Speaking for myself, it's time that by an ordinance BDA must be closed." A division bench comprising Chief Justice Dinesh Kumar and Justice TG Shivashankare Gowda was hearing a petition filed by one Muddegowda, whose 18 guntas of land was acquired by the BDA for Sir MV Layout without paying him compensation.

Narrating the plight of the land loser to BDA Commissioner N Jayaram, who was in the court, the Chief Justice said the land was taken away in 2003 without issuing any acquisition notification. The landowner claims that he lost 18 guntas in 2003 whereas the BDA says that it has taken only 15 guntas. "If that is the case, you could have given him compensation. Now in 2024, after 21 years, BDA wants to conduct a survey to find out the exact land taken. If so, what can a citizen do in this country? Suppose, if you (commissioner) are a landowner, what will you do?" the CJ questioned Jayaram. P2

We are pained because the citizen has been waiting for 21 years, not even getting one paisa for his land. Commissioner, we are not finding fault with you, but are commanding in a requesting tone, pull up your officers

PS Dinesh Kumar, CJ of K'taka HC